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Year: 2012

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CMS Collaboration ; Amsler, C ; Chiochia, V ; et al

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevLett.108.252002>

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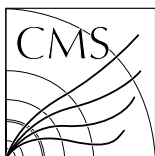
ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-75936>

Journal Article

Originally published at:

CMS Collaboration; Amsler, C; Chiochia, V; et al (2012). Observation of a new Xi(b) baryon. Physical Review Letters, (108):252002.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevLett.108.252002>

CERN-PH-EP/2012-118  
2012/06/22

CMS-BPH-12-001

# Observation of a new $\Xi_b$ baryon

The CMS Collaboration\*

## Abstract

The observation of a new  $b$  baryon via its strong decay into  $\Xi_b^- \pi^+$  (plus charge conjugates) is reported. The measurement uses a data sample of  $pp$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s} = 7$  TeV collected by the CMS experiment at the LHC, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of  $5.3 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ . The known  $\Xi_b^-$  baryon is reconstructed via the decay chain  $\Xi_b^- \rightarrow J/\psi \Xi^- \rightarrow \mu^+ \mu^- \Lambda^0 \pi^-$ , with  $\Lambda^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$ . A peak is observed in the distribution of the difference between the mass of the  $\Xi_b^- \pi^+$  system and the sum of the masses of the  $\Xi_b^-$  and  $\pi^+$ , with a significance exceeding 5 standard deviations. The mass difference of the peak is  $14.84 \pm 0.74 \text{ (stat.)} \pm 0.28 \text{ (syst.) MeV}$ . The new state most likely corresponds to the  $J^P = 3/2^+$  companion of the  $\Xi_b$ .

*Submitted to Physical Review Letters*

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\*See Appendix A for the list of collaboration members



According to the well-established quark model and corresponding spectroscopy of baryons, there are several predicted baryons containing one strange and one beauty valence quark. These include the  $\Xi_b$  (ground state) and  $\Xi'_b$ , both with total angular momentum and parity  $J^P = 1/2^+$ , a  $J^P = 3/2^+$  state with angular momentum  $L = 0$  (often referred to, as will be done in this Letter, as  $\Xi_b^*$ ), and two states with  $J^P = 1/2^-$  and  $3/2^-$ , both with angular momentum  $L = 1$ . These baryons can be neutral (valence quark content  $u-s-b$ ) or negatively charged ( $d-s-b$ ). At the Tevatron, baryons with masses and decay modes consistent with the theoretical predictions for the ground state  $\Xi_b$  baryons have been observed [1–3], although their quantum numbers have not yet been established. The allowed decays of the experimentally missing  $\Xi_b$  states should be analogous to the charmed sector [4–6]. In addition, theoretical calculations [7–11] predict the mass difference between the  $\Xi'_b$  and  $\Xi_b$  to be smaller than the mass of the pion, in which case the strong decay  $\Xi'_b \rightarrow \Xi_b \pi$  is kinematically forbidden. The mass difference between the  $\Xi_b^*$  and  $\Xi_b$ , however, is expected to be large enough to allow such a decay.

This Letter presents a search for the decay  $\Xi_b^{*0} \rightarrow \Xi_b^- \pi^+$ , with  $\Xi_b^- \rightarrow J/\psi \Xi^-$ ,  $J/\psi \rightarrow \mu^+ \mu^-$ ,  $\Xi^- \rightarrow \Lambda^0 \pi^-$ , and  $\Lambda^0 \rightarrow p \pi^-$ . Charge conjugate states are implied throughout. The reconstruction of such decays involves the presence of three secondary vertices, where the  $\Xi_b^-$ ,  $\Xi^-$ , and  $\Lambda^0$  decay, which are well separated from the primary interaction vertex. The analysis is based on a data sample of  $pp$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s} = 7$  TeV, collected in 2011 by the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experiment at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), corresponding to an integrated luminosity of  $5.3 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ .

The CMS apparatus is described in detail in Ref. [12]. Its central feature is a superconducting solenoid, of 6 m internal diameter, providing a field of 3.8 T. The main subdetectors used in this analysis are the silicon tracker and the muon systems. The silicon tracker, composed of pixel and strip detector modules, is immersed in the magnetic field, and enables the measurement of charged particle momenta over the pseudorapidity range  $|\eta| < 2.5$ , where  $\eta = -\ln(\tan \theta/2)$  and  $\theta$  is the polar angle of the track relative to the counterclockwise beam direction. Muons are identified in the range  $|\eta| < 2.4$  using gas-ionization detectors embedded in the steel return yoke of the magnet.

The events used in this analysis were collected using the two-level trigger system of CMS. The first level consists of custom hardware processors and uses information from the muon systems to select events with two muons. The “high-level trigger” processor farm further decreases the event rate before data storage, requiring two opposite-sign muons compatible with being the decay products of a  $J/\psi$ , either promptly produced or displaced from the primary vertex (PV). The nonprompt  $J/\psi$  trigger requires two opposite-sign muons with an invariant mass within 200 MeV of the  $J/\psi$  mass [13], single muon transverse momentum  $p_T > 3, 3.5, 4, \text{ or } 5 \text{ GeV}$ , and dimuon vertex fit  $\chi^2$  probability larger than 10% or 15%. The requirements were made tighter depending on the LHC instantaneous luminosity so as to limit the trigger rate. In addition, the dimuon vertex must be separated from the beam line by more than 3 times the uncertainty on the separation  $\sigma_{\text{vertex}}$ , which includes the transverse vertex resolution (independently estimated for each event) and the beam line position uncertainty. Finally, the requirement  $\cos \alpha > 0.9$  is also applied, where  $\alpha$  is the angle, in the plane transverse to the beam, between the dimuon momentum and the direction from the beam line to the dimuon vertex. The prompt  $J/\psi$  trigger requires two opposite-sign muons with an invariant mass within 250 MeV of the  $J/\psi$  mass [13], dimuon  $p_T > 10 \text{ or } 13 \text{ GeV}$  (depending on the instantaneous luminosity), dimuon rapidity  $|y| < 1.25$ , and dimuon vertex fit  $\chi^2$  probability greater than 0.5%.

The reconstruction of the  $\Xi_b^- \rightarrow J/\psi \Xi^-$  candidates begins by identifying  $J/\psi \rightarrow \mu^+ \mu^-$  decays. The candidate  $J/\psi$  mesons are built by combining pairs of oppositely-charged muons (tracks

in the silicon tracker matched to tracks in the muon detectors) satisfying the trigger conditions and having an invariant mass within 150 MeV of the  $J/\psi$  mass. Candidate  $\Lambda^0$  baryons are reconstructed in decays to a pion ( $\pi_\Lambda$ ) and a proton (p) with opposite charges, where the higher momentum track is assumed to be the proton. Both tracks are required to have a track fit  $\chi^2/\text{ndf} < 5$ , where ndf is the number of degrees of freedom, and at least six hits in the silicon tracker. The  $\Lambda^0$  candidate vertex must have a fit  $\chi^2/\text{ndf} < 7$  and be displaced from the beam line by more than  $10\sigma_{\text{vertex}}$ . Possible contamination from misreconstructed  $K_S$  mesons is removed by requiring that the candidate mass, when assuming that both tracks are pions, differs from the  $K_S$  mass [13] by more than 20 MeV. Candidate  $\Xi^-$  baryons are reconstructed by combining a  $\Lambda^0$  candidate with a track ( $\pi_\Xi$ ) of the same charge as the  $\pi_\Lambda$ . A kinematic vertex fit [14] is performed, assuming that the track is a pion, and with the  $\Lambda^0$  candidate mass constrained to its world-average value [13]. A veto window of 20 MeV around the  $\Omega^-$  mass [13] is applied when assuming that the  $\pi_\Xi$  candidate is a kaon. The  $\Xi^-$  is then combined with the  $J/\psi$  to form a  $\Xi_b^-$  candidate, with a kinematic vertex fit constraining their masses to the world-average values [13]. On average, the events used in this analysis have around eight reconstructed primary vertices (PV). The PV closest in three dimensions to the  $\Xi_b^-$  trajectory is taken as the one where the  $\Xi_b^-$  was produced.

The  $\Xi_b^-$  signal selection criteria are chosen by an iterative algorithm that maximizes both the signal yield and the significance, calculated as  $S/\sqrt{S+B}$ , where the signal ( $S$ ) and background ( $B$ ) yields are evaluated in a window of  $\pm 40$  MeV around the  $\Xi_b^-$  mass,  $5790.5 \pm 2.7$  MeV [13]. The value of  $B$  is linearly interpolated to this signal region from the two mass sidebands, located between 40 and 100 MeV away from the peak value. Thirty variables are used to optimize the  $\Xi_b^-$  signal selection. At every iteration, two variables are chosen randomly, where one of them is tightened and the other loosened. If  $S$  and the significance increase, the new set of values is accepted. To avoid ending up in a local maximum, an iteration is accepted if the significance decreases by less than a random number uniformly generated between 0 and 10%. The variables used for the selection include the  $p_T$  of both muons, and of the  $J/\psi$ , p,  $\pi_\Lambda$ ,  $\pi_\Xi$ ,  $\Xi^-$ , and  $\Xi_b^-$ . The muons and  $\Xi_b^-$  can have different  $p_T$  selections in the pseudorapidity regions  $|\eta| < 1.2$  and  $|\eta| > 1.2$ , where  $|\eta| = 1.2$  is the transition between the barrel and endcap detectors. The algorithm also tunes the requirements on the differences between the reconstructed masses and the world-average masses for the  $\Lambda^0$ ,  $\Xi^-$ , and  $J/\psi$ , with the latter case being different for  $|\eta(J/\psi)| < 1.2$  and  $|\eta(J/\psi)| > 1.2$ . Also, the total  $J/\psi$  pseudorapidity coverage can be adjusted to be smaller than the full  $|\eta(J/\psi)| < 2.4$  range.

To select a  $\Xi_b^-$  sample with a good signal-over-background ratio, it is important to reject promptly produced tracks. This is done via a selection on their transverse impact parameter significances  $D_{\text{ip}}/\sigma_{D_{\text{ip}}}$ , where the impact parameter  $D_{\text{ip}}$  is calculated with respect to the beam line and  $\sigma_{D_{\text{ip}}}$  is its uncertainty. This procedure is applied to the p,  $\pi_\Lambda$ , and  $\pi_\Xi$  tracks, as well as to the  $\Lambda^0$  and  $\Xi^-$  trajectories. Long-lived particles ( $\Lambda^0$ ,  $\Xi^-$ , and  $\Xi_b^-$ ) are selected by requirements on their transverse decay lengths and on the significance  $L_{xy}/\sigma_{L_{xy}}$  of the transverse distance between their production and decay vertices  $L_{xy}$ , where  $\sigma_{L_{xy}}$  is the uncertainty of  $L_{xy}$ . Minimal fit confidence levels are required on the  $\Lambda^0$ ,  $\Xi^-$ , and  $\Xi_b^-$  decay vertices, while the three-dimensional distance significance must be smaller than the optimized thresholds for the distances between the  $\Xi^-$  trajectory and the  $J/\psi$  decay vertex, as well as between the  $\Xi_b^-$  trajectory and the chosen PV.

The  $J/\psi \Xi^-$  invariant-mass distribution for the  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates passing the selection criteria is shown in Fig. 1, together with the result of a fit with a Gaussian function representing the signal plus a second-order polynomial representing the background, which gives a signal yield of  $108 \pm 14$  events. The same figure also displays the invariant-mass distribution for background

events, in which the  $\pi_{\Xi}$  and proton have the same charge, giving further evidence that the observed peak corresponds to a real  $\Xi_b^-$  signal. The  $\Xi_b^-$  mass extracted from the fit is  $5795.0 \pm 3.1$  (stat.) MeV, in good agreement with the world-average value [13]. The corresponding mass resolution is  $23.7 \pm 3.2$  (stat.) MeV, in agreement with the value  $22.5 \pm 4.7$  MeV, obtained from a detailed Monte Carlo (MC) simulation of the CMS detector response, using PYTHIA 6.409 [15], EVTGEN [16], and GEANT4 [17].

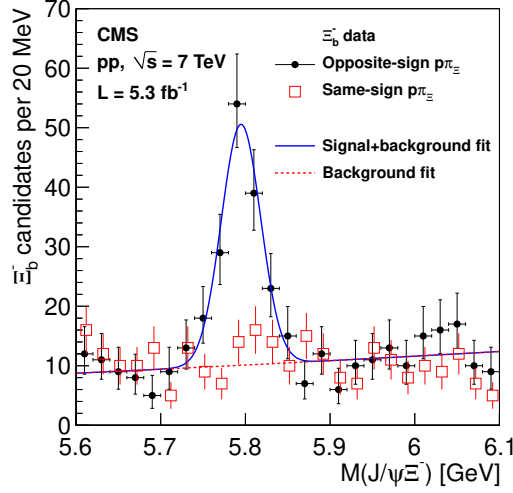


Figure 1: Invariant-mass distributions of the selected  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates (closed circles) and of the  $J/\psi \Xi^-$  pairs where the proton and  $\pi_{\Xi}$  have the same charge (open squares). The blue solid curve represents the result of the signal-plus-background fit to the  $\Xi_b^-$  distribution, while the red dashed line shows the corresponding background component.

To search for  $\Xi_b^{*0}$  baryons, the  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates with a mass within 2.5 standard deviations of the fitted peak value are combined with tracks, assumed to be pions, with a charge opposite to the  $\pi_{\Xi}$  charge (opposite-sign pairs) and coming from the selected PV, with a significance less than 3 standard deviations on the distance between the track trajectory and the PV. Other quality requirements applied to the tracks are  $p_T > 0.25$  GeV, at least two hits in the silicon pixel layers, at least five hits in the entire tracker, and a track fit  $\chi^2/\text{ndf} < 2.5$ .

The  $\Xi_b^{*0}$  search uses the mass difference  $Q$  between the measured  $J/\psi \Xi^- \pi^+$  invariant mass and the sum of the masses of the decay products,  $Q = M(J/\psi \Xi^- \pi^+) - M(J/\psi \Xi^-) - M(\pi)$ , where  $M(\pi)$  is the charged-pion mass [13]. The search for new resonances in the  $Q$  distribution requires a reliable background shape. A background model is built using candidates where the prompt pion and the  $\Xi_b^-$  have the same charge (same-sign pairs), given that the background is expected to be dominated by combinatorial sources, as checked by MC studies. The measured momentum distributions of  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates and same-sign pions ( $p(\Xi_b^-)$ ,  $p(\pi)$ ), together with the distribution of the angle between them ( $\alpha$ ), are used to randomly generate uncorrelated values for  $p(\Xi_b^-)$ ,  $p(\pi)$ , and  $\alpha$ . Given the limited statistical precision of the  $\Xi_b^-$  momentum distribution, the corresponding random numbers are generated from a parametrized version using the fit function  $f_{\Xi_b^-}(p) = p^{k_1} e^{-k_2 p}$ , where  $k_i$  are free parameters. The three random values are then combined to calculate a  $Q$  value for predicting the combinatorial background distribution. One hundred million  $Q$  values are generated in this way and the resulting distribution is fitted to the function  $Q^{c_1} (e^{-c_2 Q} + e^{-c_3 Q} + e^{-c_4 Q})$ , where  $c_i$  are free parameters. Figure 2 (a) compares the  $Q$  distribution of the same-sign  $\Xi_b^{*0}$  candidates with the predicted background shape. Alternative functional forms of  $f_{\Xi_b^-}(p)$  are used to estimate the systematic uncertainty

associated with this method, which contributes to the determination of the background parameters.

The measured opposite-sign  $Q$  distribution is displayed in Fig. 2 (b) for the range 0–50 MeV. The 21 events observed in the region  $12 < Q < 18$  MeV represent a clear excess with respect to the expected background yield of  $3.0 \pm 1.4$  events, evaluated by integrating the background function in this  $Q$  window. An unbinned maximum-likelihood fit is performed to the opposite-sign  $Q$  distribution with a Breit–Wigner distribution convolved with a Gaussian function, added to the background function previously described. The Gaussian resolution of the peak is constrained to  $1.91 \pm 0.11$  MeV, as determined in the signal MC simulation, and the background parameters are allowed to float within their total uncertainties (statistical plus systematic, added in quadrature). Figure 2 (b) also shows the result of the fit. A peak is clearly visible above the background continuum. The fitted parameters of the peak are  $Q = 14.84 \pm 0.74$  (stat.) MeV and Breit–Wigner width  $\Gamma = 2.1 \pm 1.7$  (stat.) MeV. The fitted Breit–Wigner width agrees with  $\Gamma = 0.51 \pm 0.16$  MeV, the value obtained following Eq. (102) of Ref. [18], based on lattice quantum chromodynamic calculations.

To evaluate the significance of the signal, the likelihood  $L_{s+b}$  of the signal-plus-background fit is determined. The fit is then repeated using the background-only model to obtain a new likelihood  $L_b$ . The parameters obtained from the background fit are allowed to float so that their uncertainties and correlations contribute to the calculation of the significance. The logarithmic likelihood ratio  $\sqrt{\ln(L_{s+b}/L_b)}$  would indicate a statistical significance of 6.9 standard deviations ( $\sigma$ ), corresponding to a probability of  $2.5 \times 10^{-12}$  for a background fluctuation of this significance or more to be observed. The significance remains the same if the fit is repeated using the theoretically expected width, allowing it to vary within the range of the theoretical uncertainty. The signal significance is also evaluated by generating pseudoexperiments in which the background distribution is varied within its statistical uncertainty, and determining the background fluctuation probability (“p-value”) as the number of experiments that give a fit with the same significance or higher than in the data. The “look-elsewhere effect” [19] is assessed by searching for a peak, of width  $\Gamma$  between 0 and 25 MeV, in the extended mass range  $0 < Q < 50$  MeV, where the  $\Xi_b^{*0}$  is theoretically expected. The resulting background fluctuation probability is  $p = 1.3 \times 10^{-8}$ , which corresponds to a  $5.7\sigma$  equivalent Gaussian significance. If the search range is further extended to  $0 < Q < 400$  MeV, the equivalent Gaussian significance becomes  $5.3\sigma$ .

This analysis has been repeated using simulated  $B^+$ ,  $B^0$ ,  $B_s$ , and  $\Lambda_b$  samples, obtained by the detailed MC simulation of the CMS detector already mentioned. The samples contain events in which the  $b$  hadron is forced to decay to a  $J/\psi$ , which decays to  $\mu^+\mu^-$ . No evidence of peaks due to partially reconstructed  $b$ -hadron decays is observed in these samples. The opposite-sign  $Q$  distribution obtained using  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates from the lower- and higher-mass sidebands of the signal peak also shows no excess, indicating that the observed peak is not caused by fake  $\Xi_b^-$  candidates.

The systematic uncertainty on the measured  $Q$  value is evaluated through a detailed MC simulation. The reconstructed  $Q$  value in MC simulations is measured to be  $0.23 \pm 0.10$  MeV above the generated value. This is consistent with the observation that the measured  $\Lambda^0$  and  $\Xi^-$  masses are  $0.16 \pm 0.05$  and  $0.18 \pm 0.14$  MeV, respectively, above their world averages. The sum in quadrature of the shift and its statistical uncertainty, 0.25 MeV, is considered as the systematic uncertainty due to this effect. As an extreme fitting scenario, a flat function is used for the background shape, leading to a  $Q$  value 0.12 MeV higher than the value measured with the nominal background model. Adding in quadrature this uncertainty with the previous one

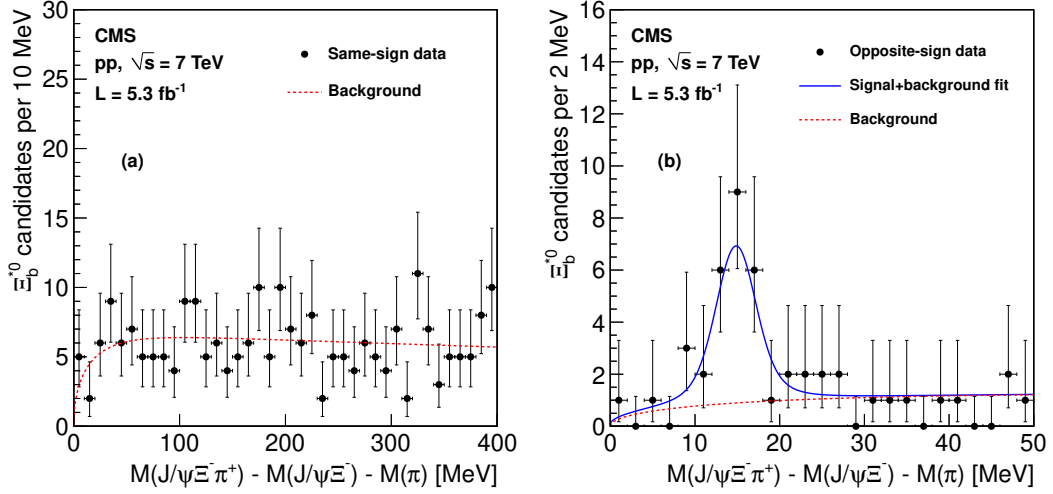


Figure 2: (a) Same-sign  $Q$  distribution (closed circles) and result of a fit with the background model (red dashed curve) in the range  $0 < Q < 400$  MeV. (b) Opposite-sign  $Q$  distribution (closed circles) in the  $0 < Q < 50$  MeV range, along with the result of the signal-plus-background fit (blue solid curve); the background term is also shown (red dashed curve).

results in a total  $Q$  systematic uncertainty of 0.28 MeV.

The observation of this resonance, corresponding to the one observed in the charm sector [4], and its mass measurement add valuable information to the understanding of the interactions between quarks within a baryon.

In summary, a new  $\Xi_b$  baryon has been observed in pp collisions at  $\sqrt{s} = 7$  TeV, using data collected by the CMS experiment, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 5.3 fb $^{-1}$ . The signal is observed with a significance exceeding 5 standard deviations. The measured  $Q = M(J/\psi \Xi^- \pi^+) - M(J/\psi \Xi^-) - M(\pi)$  value is  $14.84 \pm 0.74$  (stat.)  $\pm 0.28$  (syst.) MeV. Given the charged-pion and  $\Xi_b^-$  masses [13], the resulting b-baryon mass is  $5945.0 \pm 0.7$  (stat.)  $\pm 0.3$  (syst.)  $\pm 2.7$  (PDG) MeV, where the last uncertainty reflects the present accuracy of the  $\Xi_b^-$  mass from the Particle Data Group [13]. While the width of the new baryon is not measured with good statistical precision, it is compatible with theoretical expectations [18]. Given its measured mass and decay mode, the new baryon is likely to be the  $\Xi_b^{*0}$ , with  $J^P = 3/2^+$ .

We congratulate our colleagues in the CERN accelerator departments for the excellent performance of the LHC machine. We thank the technical and administrative staff at CERN and other CMS institutes, and acknowledge support from: FMSR (Austria); FNRS and FWO (Belgium); CNPq, CAPES, FAPERJ, and FAPESP (Brazil); MES (Bulgaria); CERN; CAS, MoST, and NSFC (China); COLCIENCIAS (Colombia); MSES (Croatia); RPF (Cyprus); MoER, SF0690030s09 and ERDF (Estonia); Academy of Finland, MEC, and HIP (Finland); CEA and CNRS/IN2P3 (France); BMBF, DFG, and HGF (Germany); GSRT (Greece); OTKA and NKTH (Hungary); DAE and DST (India); IPM (Iran); SFI (Ireland); INFN (Italy); NRF and WCU (Korea); LAS (Lithuania); CINVESTAV, CONACYT, SEP, and UASLP-FAI (Mexico); MSI (New Zealand); PAEC (Pakistan); MSHE and NSC (Poland); FCT (Portugal); JINR (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan); MON, RosAtom, RAS and RFBR (Russia); MSTB (Serbia); MICINN and CPAN (Spain); Swiss Funding Agencies (Switzerland); NSC (Taipei); TUBITAK and TAEK (Turkey); STFC (United Kingdom); DOE and NSF (USA).



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## A The CMS Collaboration

### **Yerevan Physics Institute, Yerevan, Armenia**

S. Chatrchyan, V. Khachatryan, A.M. Sirunyan, A. Tumasyan

### **Institut für Hochenergiephysik der OeAW, Wien, Austria**

W. Adam, T. Bergauer, M. Dragicevic, J. Erö, C. Fabjan<sup>1</sup>, M. Friedl, R. Frühwirth<sup>1</sup>, V.M. Ghete, J. Hammer, N. Hörmann, J. Hrubec, M. Jeitler<sup>1</sup>, W. Kiesenhofer, V. Knünz, M. Krammer<sup>1</sup>, D. Liko, I. Mikulec, M. Pernicka<sup>†</sup>, B. Rahbaran, C. Rohringer, H. Rohringer, R. Schöfbeck, J. Strauss, A. Taurok, P. Wagner, W. Waltenberger, G. Walzel, E. Widl, C.-E. Wulz<sup>1</sup>

### **National Centre for Particle and High Energy Physics, Minsk, Belarus**

V. Mossolov, N. Shumeiko, J. Suarez Gonzalez

### **Universiteit Antwerpen, Antwerpen, Belgium**

S. Bansal, T. Cornelis, E.A. De Wolf, X. Janssen, S. Luyckx, T. Maes, L. Mucibello, S. Ochesanu, B. Roland, R. Rougny, M. Selvaggi, Z. Staykova, H. Van Haevermaet, P. Van Mechelen, N. Van Remortel, A. Van Spilbeeck

### **Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium**

F. Blekman, S. Blyweert, J. D'Hondt, R. Gonzalez Suarez, A. Kalogeropoulos, M. Maes, A. Olbrechts, W. Van Doninck, P. Van Mulders, G.P. Van Onsem, I. Villella

### **Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, Belgium**

O. Charaf, B. Clerbaux, G. De Lentdecker, V. Dero, A.P.R. Gay, T. Hreus, A. Léonard, P.E. Marage, T. Reis, L. Thomas, C. Vander Velde, P. Vanlaer, J. Wang

### **Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium**

V. Adler, K. Beernaert, A. Cimmino, S. Costantini, G. Garcia, M. Grunewald, B. Klein, J. Lellouch, A. Marinov, J. McCartin, A.A. Ocampo Rios, D. Ryckbosch, N. Strobbe, F. Thyssen, M. Tytgat, L. Vanelderen, P. Verwilligen, S. Walsh, E. Yazgan, N. Zaganidis

### **Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium**

S. Basegmez, G. Bruno, R. Castello, L. Ceard, C. Delaere, T. du Pree, D. Favart, L. Forthomme, A. Giammanco<sup>2</sup>, J. Hollar, V. Lemaitre, J. Liao, O. Militaru, C. Nuttens, D. Pagano, A. Pin, K. Piotrkowski, N. Schul, J.M. Vizan Garcia

### **Université de Mons, Mons, Belgium**

N. Beliy, T. Caebergs, E. Daubie, G.H. Hammad

### **Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Fisicas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

G.A. Alves, M. Correa Martins Junior, D. De Jesus Damiao, T. Martins, M.E. Pol, M.H.G. Souza

### **Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

W.L. Aldá Júnior, W. Carvalho, A. Custódio, E.M. Da Costa, C. De Oliveira Martins, S. Fonseca De Souza, D. Matos Figueiredo, L. Mundim, H. Nogima, V. Oguri, W.L. Prado Da Silva, A. Santoro, L. Soares Jorge, A. Sznajder

### **Instituto de Fisica Teorica, Universidade Estadual Paulista, Sao Paulo, Brazil**

C.A. Bernardes<sup>3</sup>, F.A. Dias<sup>4</sup>, T.R. Fernandez Perez Tomei, E. M. Gregores<sup>3</sup>, C. Lagana, F. Marinho, P.G. Mercadante<sup>3</sup>, S.F. Novaes, Sandra S. Padula

### **Institute for Nuclear Research and Nuclear Energy, Sofia, Bulgaria**

V. Genchev<sup>5</sup>, P. Iaydjiev<sup>5</sup>, S. Piperov, M. Rodozov, S. Stoykova, G. Sultanov, V. Tcholakov, R. Trayanov, M. Vutova

**University of Sofia, Sofia, Bulgaria**

A. Dimitrov, R. Hadjiiska, V. Kozhuharov, L. Litov, B. Pavlov, P. Petkov

**Institute of High Energy Physics, Beijing, China**

J.G. Bian, G.M. Chen, H.S. Chen, C.H. Jiang, D. Liang, S. Liang, X. Meng, J. Tao, J. Wang, X. Wang, Z. Wang, H. Xiao, M. Xu, J. Zang, Z. Zhang

**State Key Lab. of Nucl. Phys. and Tech., Peking University, Beijing, China**

C. Asawatangtrakuldee, Y. Ban, S. Guo, Y. Guo, W. Li, S. Liu, Y. Mao, S.J. Qian, H. Teng, S. Wang, B. Zhu, W. Zou

**Universidad de Los Andes, Bogota, Colombia**

C. Avila, J.P. Gomez, B. Gomez Moreno, A.F. Osorio Oliveros, J.C. Sanabria

**Technical University of Split, Split, Croatia**

N. Godinovic, D. Lelas, R. Plestina<sup>6</sup>, D. Polic, I. Puljak<sup>5</sup>

**University of Split, Split, Croatia**

Z. Antunovic, M. Kovac

**Institute Rudjer Boskovic, Zagreb, Croatia**

V. Brigljevic, S. Duric, K. Kadija, J. Luetic, S. Morovic

**University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus**

A. Attikis, M. Galanti, G. Mavromanolakis, J. Mousa, C. Nicolaou, F. Ptochos, P.A. Razis

**Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic**

M. Finger, M. Finger Jr.

**Academy of Scientific Research and Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Egyptian Network of High Energy Physics, Cairo, Egypt**

Y. Assran<sup>7</sup>, S. Elgammal<sup>8</sup>, A. Ellithi Kamel<sup>9</sup>, S. Khalil<sup>8</sup>, M.A. Mahmoud<sup>10</sup>, A. Radi<sup>11,12</sup>

**National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Tallinn, Estonia**

M. Kadastik, M. Müntel, M. Raidal, L. Rebane, A. Tiko

**Department of Physics, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland**

V. Azzolini, P. Eerola, G. Fedi, M. Voutilainen

**Helsinki Institute of Physics, Helsinki, Finland**

J. Härkönen, A. Heikkinen, V. Karimäki, R. Kinnunen, M.J. Kortelainen, T. Lampén, K. Lassila-Perini, S. Lehti, T. Lindén, P. Luukka, T. Mäenpää, T. Peltola, E. Tuominen, J. Tuominiemi, E. Tuovinen, D. Ungaro, L. Wendland

**Lappeenranta University of Technology, Lappeenranta, Finland**

K. Banzuzi, A. Karjalainen, A. Korpela, T. Tuuva

**DSM/IRFU, CEA/Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette, France**

M. Besancon, S. Choudhury, M. Dejardin, D. Denegri, B. Fabbro, J.L. Faure, F. Ferri, S. Ganjour, A. Givernaud, P. Gras, G. Hamel de Monchenault, P. Jarry, E. Locci, J. Malcles, L. Millischer, A. Nayak, J. Rander, A. Rosowsky, I. Shreyber, M. Titov

**Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, Ecole Polytechnique, IN2P3-CNRS, Palaiseau, France**

S. Baffioni, F. Beaudette, L. Benhabib, L. Bianchini, M. Bluj<sup>13</sup>, C. Broutin, P. Busson, C. Charlot, N. Daci, T. Dahms, L. Dobrzynski, R. Granier de Cassagnac, M. Haguénauer, P. Miné, C. Mironov, M. Nguyen, C. Ochando, P. Paganini, D. Sabes, R. Salerno, Y. Sirois, C. Veelken, A. Zabi

**Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien, Université de Strasbourg, Université de Haute Alsace Mulhouse, CNRS/IN2P3, Strasbourg, France**

J.-L. Agram<sup>14</sup>, J. Andrea, D. Bloch, D. Bodin, J.-M. Brom, M. Cardaci, E.C. Chabert, C. Collard, E. Conte<sup>14</sup>, F. Drouhin<sup>14</sup>, C. Ferro, J.-C. Fontaine<sup>14</sup>, D. Gelé, U. Goerlach, P. Juillot, A.-C. Le Bihan, P. Van Hove

**Centre de Calcul de l'Institut National de Physique Nucleaire et de Physique des Particules (IN2P3), Villeurbanne, France**

F. Fassi, D. Mercier

**Université de Lyon, Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1, CNRS-IN2P3, Institut de Physique Nucléaire de Lyon, Villeurbanne, France**

S. Beauceron, N. Beaupere, O. Bondu, G. Boudoul, H. Brun, J. Chasserat, R. Chierici<sup>5</sup>, D. Contardo, P. Depasse, H. El Mamouni, J. Fay, S. Gascon, M. Gouzevitch, B. Ille, T. Kurca, M. Lethuillier, L. Mirabito, S. Perries, V. Sordini, S. Tosi, Y. Tschudi, P. Verdier, S. Viret

**Institute of High Energy Physics and Informatization, Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia**

Z. Tsamalaidze<sup>15</sup>

**RWTH Aachen University, I. Physikalisches Institut, Aachen, Germany**

G. Anagnostou, S. Beranek, M. Edelhoff, L. Feld, N. Heracleous, O. Hindrichs, R. Jussen, K. Klein, J. Merz, A. Ostapchuk, A. Perieanu, F. Raupach, J. Sammet, S. Schael, D. Sprenger, H. Weber, B. Wittmer, V. Zhukov<sup>16</sup>

**RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut A, Aachen, Germany**

M. Ata, J. Caudron, E. Dietz-Laursonn, M. Erdmann, A. Güth, T. Hebbeker, C. Heidemann, K. Hoepfner, D. Klingebiel, P. Kreuzer, J. Lingemann, C. Magass, M. Merschmeyer, A. Meyer, M. Olschewski, P. Papacz, H. Pieta, H. Reithler, S.A. Schmitz, L. Sonnenschein, J. Steggemann, D. Teyssier, M. Weber

**RWTH Aachen University, III. Physikalisches Institut B, Aachen, Germany**

M. Bontenackels, V. Cherepanov, G. Flügge, H. Geenen, M. Geisler, W. Haj Ahmad, F. Hoehle, B. Kargoll, T. Kress, Y. Kuessel, A. Nowack, L. Perchalla, O. Pooth, J. Rennefeld, P. Sauerland, A. Stahl

**Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Hamburg, Germany**

M. Aldaya Martin, J. Behr, W. Behrenhoff, U. Behrens, M. Bergholz<sup>17</sup>, A. Bethani, K. Borras, A. Burgmeier, A. Cakir, L. Calligaris, A. Campbell, E. Castro, F. Costanza, D. Dammann, G. Eckerlin, D. Eckstein, D. Fischer, G. Flucke, A. Geiser, I. Glushkov, S. Habib, J. Hauk, H. Jung<sup>5</sup>, M. Kasemann, P. Katsas, C. Kleinwort, H. Kluge, A. Knutsson, M. Krämer, D. Krücker, E. Kuznetsova, W. Lange, W. Lohmann<sup>17</sup>, B. Lutz, R. Mankel, I. Marfin, M. Marienfeld, I.-A. Melzer-Pellmann, A.B. Meyer, J. Mnich, A. Mussgiller, S. Naumann-Emme, J. Olzem, H. Perrey, A. Petrukhin, D. Pitzl, A. Raspereza, P.M. Ribeiro Cipriano, C. Riedl, M. Rosin, J. Salfeld-Nebgen, R. Schmidt<sup>17</sup>, T. Schoerner-Sadenius, N. Sen, A. Spiridonov, M. Stein, R. Walsh, C. Wissing

**University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany**

C. Autermann, V. Blobel, S. Bobrovskiy, J. Draeger, H. Enderle, J. Erfle, U. Gebbert, M. Görner, T. Hermanns, R.S. Höing, K. Kaschube, G. Kaussen, H. Kirschenmann, R. Klanner, J. Lange, B. Mura, F. Nowak, T. Peiffer, N. Pietsch, C. Sander, H. Schettler, P. Schleper, E. Schlieckau, A. Schmidt, M. Schröder, T. Schum, H. Stadie, G. Steinbrück, J. Thomsen

**Institut für Experimentelle Kernphysik, Karlsruhe, Germany**

C. Barth, J. Berger, T. Chwalek, W. De Boer, A. Dierlamm, M. Feindt, M. Guthoff<sup>5</sup>, C. Hackstein, F. Hartmann, M. Heinrich, H. Held, K.H. Hoffmann, S. Honc, I. Katkov<sup>16</sup>, J.R. Komaragiri, D. Martschei, S. Mueller, Th. Müller, M. Niegel, A. Nürnberg, O. Oberst, A. Oehler, J. Ott, G. Quast, K. Rabbertz, F. Ratnikov, N. Ratnikova, S. Röcker, A. Scheurer, F.-P. Schilling, G. Schott, H.J. Simonis, F.M. Stober, D. Troendle, R. Ulrich, J. Wagner-Kuhr, T. Weiler, M. Zeise

**Institute of Nuclear Physics "Demokritos", Aghia Paraskevi, Greece**

G. Daskalakis, T. Geralis, S. Kesisoglou, A. Kyriakis, D. Loukas, I. Manolakos, A. Markou, C. Markou, C. Mavrommatis, E. Ntomari

**University of Athens, Athens, Greece**

L. Gouskos, T.J. Mertzimekis, A. Panagiotou, N. Saoulidou

**University of Ioánnina, Ioánnina, Greece**

I. Evangelou, C. Foudas<sup>5</sup>, P. Kokkas, N. Manthos, I. Papadopoulos, V. Patras

**KFKI Research Institute for Particle and Nuclear Physics, Budapest, Hungary**

G. Bencze, C. Hajdu<sup>5</sup>, P. Hidas, D. Horvath<sup>18</sup>, B. Radics, F. Sikler, V. Veszpremi, G. Vesztergombi<sup>19</sup>

**Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary**

N. Beni, S. Czellar, J. Molnar, J. Palinkas, Z. Szillasi

**University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary**

J. Karancsi, P. Raics, Z.L. Trocsanyi, B. Ujvari

**Panjab University, Chandigarh, India**

S.B. Beri, V. Bhatnagar, N. Dhingra, R. Gupta, M. Jindal, M. Kaur, M.Z. Mehta, N. Nishu, L.K. Saini, A. Sharma, J. Singh

**University of Delhi, Delhi, India**

S. Ahuja, A. Bhardwaj, B.C. Choudhary, A. Kumar, A. Kumar, S. Malhotra, M. Naimuddin, K. Ranjan, V. Sharma, R.K. Shivpuri

**Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, India**

S. Banerjee, S. Bhattacharya, S. Dutta, B. Gomber, Sa. Jain, Sh. Jain, R. Khurana, S. Sarkar, M. Sharan

**Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, India**

A. Abdulsalam, R.K. Choudhury, D. Dutta, S. Kailas, V. Kumar, P. Mehta, A.K. Mohanty<sup>5</sup>, L.M. Pant, P. Shukla

**Tata Institute of Fundamental Research - EHEP, Mumbai, India**

T. Aziz, S. Ganguly, M. Guchait<sup>20</sup>, M. Maity<sup>21</sup>, G. Majumder, K. Mazumdar, G.B. Mohanty, B. Parida, K. Sudhakar, N. Wickramage

**Tata Institute of Fundamental Research - HECR, Mumbai, India**

S. Banerjee, S. Dugad

**Institute for Research in Fundamental Sciences (IPM), Tehran, Iran**

H. Arfaei, H. Bakhshiansohi<sup>22</sup>, S.M. Etesami<sup>23</sup>, A. Fahim<sup>22</sup>, M. Hashemi, A. Jafari<sup>22</sup>, M. Khakzad, A. Mohammadi<sup>24</sup>, M. Mohammadi Najafabadi, S. Paktinat Mehdiabadi, B. Safarzadeh<sup>25</sup>, M. Zeinali<sup>23</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Bari <sup>a</sup>, Università di Bari <sup>b</sup>, Politecnico di Bari <sup>c</sup>, Bari, Italy**

M. Abbrescia<sup>a,b</sup>, L. Barbone<sup>a,b</sup>, C. Calabria<sup>a,b,5</sup>, S.S. Chhibra<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Colaleo<sup>a</sup>, D. Creanza<sup>a,c</sup>, N. De Filippis<sup>a,c,5</sup>, M. De Palma<sup>a,b</sup>, L. Fiore<sup>a</sup>, G. Iaselli<sup>a,c</sup>, L. Lusito<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Maggi<sup>a,c</sup>, M. Maggi<sup>a</sup>, B. Marangelli<sup>a,b</sup>, S. My<sup>a,c</sup>, S. Nuzzo<sup>a,b</sup>, N. Pacifico<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Pompili<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Pugliese<sup>a,c</sup>, G. Selvaggi<sup>a,b</sup>, L. Silvestris<sup>a</sup>, G. Singh<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Zito<sup>a</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Bologna <sup>a</sup>, Università di Bologna <sup>b</sup>, Bologna, Italy**

G. Abbiendi<sup>a</sup>, A.C. Benvenuti<sup>a</sup>, D. Bonacorsi<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Braibant-Giacomelli<sup>a,b</sup>, L. Brigliadori<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Capiluppi<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Castro<sup>a,b</sup>, F.R. Cavallo<sup>a</sup>, M. Cuffiani<sup>a,b</sup>, G.M. Dallavalle<sup>a</sup>, F. Fabbri<sup>a</sup>, A. Fanfani<sup>a,b</sup>, D. Fasanella<sup>a,b,5</sup>, P. Giacomelli<sup>a</sup>, C. Grandi<sup>a</sup>, L. Guiducci<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Marcellini<sup>a</sup>, G. Masetti<sup>a</sup>, M. Meneghelli<sup>a,b,5</sup>, A. Montanari<sup>a</sup>, F.L. Navarria<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Odorici<sup>a</sup>, A. Perrotta<sup>a</sup>, F. Primavera<sup>a,b</sup>, A.M. Rossi<sup>a,b</sup>, T. Rovelli<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Siroli<sup>a,b</sup>, R. Travaglini<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Catania <sup>a</sup>, Università di Catania <sup>b</sup>, Catania, Italy**

S. Albergo<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Cappello<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Chiorboli<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Costa<sup>a,b</sup>, R. Potenza<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Tricomi<sup>a,b</sup>, C. Tuve<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Firenze <sup>a</sup>, Università di Firenze <sup>b</sup>, Firenze, Italy**

G. Barbagli<sup>a</sup>, V. Ciulli<sup>a,b</sup>, C. Civinini<sup>a</sup>, R. D'Alessandro<sup>a,b</sup>, E. Focardi<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Frosali<sup>a,b</sup>, E. Gallo<sup>a</sup>, S. Gonzi<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Meschini<sup>a</sup>, S. Paoletti<sup>a</sup>, G. Sguazzoni<sup>a</sup>, A. Tropiano<sup>a,5</sup>

**INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, Frascati, Italy**

L. Benussi, S. Bianco, S. Colafranceschi<sup>26</sup>, F. Fabbri, D. Piccolo

**INFN Sezione di Genova, Genova, Italy**

P. Fabbriatore, R. Musenich

**INFN Sezione di Milano-Bicocca <sup>a</sup>, Università di Milano-Bicocca <sup>b</sup>, Milano, Italy**

A. Benaglia<sup>a,b,5</sup>, F. De Guio<sup>a,b</sup>, L. Di Matteo<sup>a,b,5</sup>, S. Fiorendi<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Gennai<sup>a,5</sup>, A. Ghezzi<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Malvezzi<sup>a</sup>, R.A. Manzoni<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Martelli<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Massironi<sup>a,b,5</sup>, D. Menasce<sup>a</sup>, L. Moroni<sup>a</sup>, M. Paganoni<sup>a,b</sup>, D. Pedrini<sup>a</sup>, S. Ragazzi<sup>a,b</sup>, N. Redaelli<sup>a</sup>, S. Sala<sup>a</sup>, T. Tabarelli de Fatis<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Napoli <sup>a</sup>, Università di Napoli "Federico II" <sup>b</sup>, Napoli, Italy**

S. Buontempo<sup>a</sup>, C.A. Carrillo Montoya<sup>a,5</sup>, N. Cavallo<sup>a,27</sup>, A. De Cosa<sup>a,b,5</sup>, O. Dogangun<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Fabozzi<sup>a,27</sup>, A.O.M. Iorio<sup>a</sup>, L. Lista<sup>a</sup>, S. Meola<sup>a,28</sup>, M. Merola<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Paolucci<sup>a,5</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Padova <sup>a</sup>, Università di Padova <sup>b</sup>, Università di Trento (Trento) <sup>c</sup>, Padova, Italy**

P. Azzi<sup>a</sup>, N. Bacchetta<sup>a,5</sup>, P. Bellan<sup>a,b</sup>, D. Bisello<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Branca<sup>a,5</sup>, R. Carlin<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Checchia<sup>a</sup>, T. Dorigo<sup>a</sup>, F. Gasparini<sup>a,b</sup>, U. Gasparini<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Gozzelino<sup>a</sup>, K. Kanishchev<sup>a,c</sup>, S. Lacaprara<sup>a</sup>, I. Lazzizzera<sup>a,c</sup>, M. Margoni<sup>a,b</sup>, A.T. Meneguzzo<sup>a,b</sup>, N. Pozzobon<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Ronchese<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Simonetto<sup>a,b</sup>, E. Torassa<sup>a</sup>, M. Tosi<sup>a,b,5</sup>, S. Vanini<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Zotto<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Zumerle<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Pavia <sup>a</sup>, Università di Pavia <sup>b</sup>, Pavia, Italy**

M. Gabusi<sup>a,b</sup>, S.P. Ratti<sup>a,b</sup>, C. Riccardi<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Torre<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Vitulo<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Perugia <sup>a</sup>, Università di Perugia <sup>b</sup>, Perugia, Italy**

M. Biasini<sup>a,b</sup>, G.M. Bilei<sup>a</sup>, L. Fano<sup>a,b</sup>, P. Lariccia<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Lucaroni<sup>a,b,5</sup>, G. Mantovani<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Menichelli<sup>a</sup>, A. Nappi<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Romeo<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Saha<sup>a</sup>, A. Santocchia<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Taroni<sup>a,b,5</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Pisa <sup>a</sup>, Università di Pisa <sup>b</sup>, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa <sup>c</sup>, Pisa, Italy**

P. Azzurri<sup>a,c</sup>, G. Bagliesi<sup>a</sup>, T. Boccali<sup>a</sup>, G. Broccolo<sup>a,c</sup>, R. Castaldi<sup>a</sup>, R.T. D'Agnolo<sup>a,c</sup>, R. Dell'Orso<sup>a</sup>, F. Fiori<sup>a,b,5</sup>, L. Foà<sup>a,c</sup>, A. Giassi<sup>a</sup>, A. Kraan<sup>a</sup>, F. Ligabue<sup>a,c</sup>, T. Lomtadze<sup>a</sup>, L. Martini<sup>a,29</sup>, A. Messineo<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Palla<sup>a</sup>, A. Rizzi<sup>a,b</sup>, A.T. Serban<sup>a,30</sup>, P. Spagnolo<sup>a</sup>, P. Squillacioti<sup>a,5</sup>, R. Tenchini<sup>a</sup>, G. Tonelli<sup>a,b,5</sup>, A. Venturi<sup>a,5</sup>, P.G. Verdini<sup>a</sup>



**INFN Sezione di Roma <sup>a</sup>, Università di Roma "La Sapienza" <sup>b</sup>, Roma, Italy**

L. Barone<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Cavallari<sup>a</sup>, D. Del Re<sup>a,b,5</sup>, M. Diemoz<sup>a</sup>, M. Grassi<sup>a,b,5</sup>, E. Longo<sup>a,b</sup>,  
P. Meridiani<sup>a,5</sup>, F. Micheli<sup>a,b</sup>, S. Nourbakhsh<sup>a,b</sup>, G. Organtini<sup>a,b</sup>, R. Paramatti<sup>a</sup>, S. Rahatlou<sup>a,b</sup>,  
M. Sigamani<sup>a</sup>, L. Soffi<sup>a,b</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Torino <sup>a</sup>, Università di Torino <sup>b</sup>, Università del Piemonte Orientale (Novara) <sup>c</sup>, Torino, Italy**

N. Amapane<sup>a,b</sup>, R. Arcidiacono<sup>a,c</sup>, S. Argiro<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Arneodo<sup>a,c</sup>, C. Biino<sup>a</sup>, C. Botta<sup>a,b</sup>,  
N. Cartiglia<sup>a</sup>, M. Costa<sup>a,b</sup>, N. Demaria<sup>a</sup>, A. Graziano<sup>a,b</sup>, C. Mariotti<sup>a,5</sup>, S. Maselli<sup>a</sup>, E. Migliore<sup>a,b</sup>,  
V. Monaco<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Musich<sup>a,5</sup>, M.M. Obertino<sup>a,c</sup>, N. Pastrone<sup>a</sup>, M. Pelliccioni<sup>a</sup>, A. Potenza<sup>a,b</sup>,  
A. Romero<sup>a,b</sup>, M. Ruspà<sup>a,c</sup>, R. Sacchi<sup>a,b</sup>, V. Sola<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Solano<sup>a,b</sup>, A. Staiano<sup>a</sup>, A. Vilela Pereira<sup>a</sup>

**INFN Sezione di Trieste <sup>a</sup>, Università di Trieste <sup>b</sup>, Trieste, Italy**

S. Belforte<sup>a</sup>, V. Candelise<sup>a,b</sup>, F. Cossutti<sup>a</sup>, G. Della Ricca<sup>a,b</sup>, B. Gobbo<sup>a</sup>, M. Marone<sup>a,b,5</sup>,  
D. Montanino<sup>a,b,5</sup>, A. Penzo<sup>a</sup>, A. Schizzi<sup>a,b</sup>

**Kangwon National University, Chunchon, Korea**

S.G. Heo, T.Y. Kim, S.K. Nam

**Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Korea**

S. Chang, J. Chung, D.H. Kim, G.N. Kim, D.J. Kong, H. Park, S.R. Ro, D.C. Son, T. Son

**Chonnam National University, Institute for Universe and Elementary Particles, Kwangju, Korea**

J.Y. Kim, Zero J. Kim, S. Song

**Konkuk University, Seoul, Korea**

H.Y. Jo

**Korea University, Seoul, Korea**

S. Choi, D. Gyun, B. Hong, M. Jo, H. Kim, T.J. Kim, K.S. Lee, D.H. Moon, S.K. Park

**University of Seoul, Seoul, Korea**

M. Choi, S. Kang, J.H. Kim, C. Park, I.C. Park, S. Park, G. Ryu

**Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon, Korea**

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**Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania**

M.J. Bilinskas, I. Grigelionis, M. Janulis, A. Juodagalvis

**Centro de Investigacion y de Estudios Avanzados del IPN, Mexico City, Mexico**

H. Castilla-Valdez, E. De La Cruz-Burelo, I. Heredia-de La Cruz, R. Lopez-Fernandez,  
R. Magaña Villalba, J. Martínez-Ortega, A. Sánchez-Hernández, L.M. Villasenor-Cendejas

**Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City, Mexico**

S. Carrillo Moreno, F. Vazquez Valencia

**Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico**

H.A. Salazar Ibarguen

**Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, San Luis Potosí, Mexico**

E. Casimiro Linares, A. Morelos Pineda, M.A. Reyes-Santos

**University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand**

D. Krofcheck

**University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand**

A.J. Bell, P.H. Butler, R. Doesburg, S. Reucroft, H. Silverwood

**National Centre for Physics, Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan**

M. Ahmad, M.I. Asghar, H.R. Hoorani, S. Khalid, W.A. Khan, T. Khurshid, S. Qazi, M.A. Shah, M. Shoaib

**Institute of Experimental Physics, Faculty of Physics, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland**

G. Brona, K. Bunkowski, M. Cwiok, W. Dominik, K. Doroba, A. Kalinowski, M. Konecki, J. Krolikowski

**Soltan Institute for Nuclear Studies, Warsaw, Poland**

H. Bialkowska, B. Boimska, T. Frueboes, R. Gokieli, M. Górski, M. Kazana, K. Nawrocki, K. Romanowska-Rybinska, M. Szleper, G. Wrochna, P. Zalewski

**Laboratório de Instrumentação e Física Experimental de Partículas, Lisboa, Portugal**

N. Almeida, P. Bargassa, A. David, P. Faccioli, P.G. Ferreira Parracho, M. Gallinaro, J. Seixas, J. Varela, P. Vischia

**Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia**

I. Belotelov, P. Bunin, M. Gavrilenko, I. Golutvin, I. Gorbunov, A. Kamenev, V. Karjavin, G. Kozlov, A. Lanev, A. Malakhov, P. Moisenz, V. Palichik, V. Perelygin, S. Shmatov, V. Smirnov, A. Volodko, A. Zarubin

**Petersburg Nuclear Physics Institute, Gatchina (St Petersburg), Russia**

S. Evstyukhin, V. Golovtsov, Y. Ivanov, V. Kim, P. Levchenko, V. Murzin, V. Oreshkin, I. Smirnov, V. Sulimov, L. Uvarov, S. Vavilov, A. Vorobyev, An. Vorobyev

**Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia**

Yu. Andreev, A. Dermenev, S. Gninenko, N. Golubev, M. Kirsanov, N. Krasnikov, V. Matveev, A. Pashenkov, D. Tlisov, A. Toropin

**Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia**

V. Epshteyn, M. Erofeeva, V. Gavrilov, M. Kossov<sup>5</sup>, N. Lychkovskaya, V. Popov, G. Safronov, S. Semenov, V. Stolin, E. Vlasov, A. Zhokin

**Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia**

A. Belyaev, E. Boos, M. Dubinin<sup>4</sup>, L. Dudko, A. Ershov, A. Gribushin, V. Klyukhin, O. Kodolova, I. Lokhtin, A. Markina, S. Obraztsov, M. Perfilov, S. Petrushanko, A. Popov, L. Sarycheva<sup>†</sup>, V. Savrin, A. Snigirev

**P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute, Moscow, Russia**

V. Andreev, M. Azarkin, I. Dremin, M. Kirakosyan, A. Leonidov, G. Mesyats, S.V. Rusakov, A. Vinogradov

**State Research Center of Russian Federation, Institute for High Energy Physics, Protvino, Russia**

I. Azhgirey, I. Bayshev, S. Bitioukov, V. Grishin<sup>5</sup>, V. Kachanov, D. Konstantinov, A. Korablev, V. Krychkin, V. Petrov, R. Ryutin, A. Sobol, L. Tourtchanovitch, S. Troshin, N. Tyurin, A. Uzunian, A. Volkov

**University of Belgrade, Faculty of Physics and Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia**

P. Adzic<sup>31</sup>, M. Djordjevic, M. Ekmedzic, D. Krpic<sup>31</sup>, J. Milosevic

**Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas Medioambientales y Tecnológicas (CIEMAT), Madrid, Spain**

M. Aguilar-Benitez, J. Alcaraz Maestre, P. Arce, C. Battilana, E. Calvo, M. Cerrada, M. Chamizo Llatas, N. Colino, B. De La Cruz, A. Delgado Peris, C. Diez Pardos, D. Domínguez Vázquez, C. Fernandez Bedoya, J.P. Fernández Ramos, A. Ferrando, J. Flix, M.C. Fouz, P. Garcia-Abia, O. Gonzalez Lopez, S. Goy Lopez, J.M. Hernandez, M.I. Josa, G. Merino, J. Puerta Pelayo, A. Quintario Olmeda, I. Redondo, L. Romero, J. Santaolalla, M.S. Soares, C. Willmott

**Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, Spain**

C. Albajar, G. Codispoti, J.F. de Trocóniz

**Universidad de Oviedo, Oviedo, Spain**

J. Cuevas, J. Fernandez Menendez, S. Folgueras, I. Gonzalez Caballero, L. Lloret Iglesias, J. Piedra Gomez<sup>32</sup>

**Instituto de Física de Cantabria (IFCA), CSIC-Universidad de Cantabria, Santander, Spain**

J.A. Brochero Cifuentes, I.J. Cabrillo, A. Calderon, S.H. Chuang, J. Duarte Campderros, M. Felcini<sup>33</sup>, M. Fernandez, G. Gomez, J. Gonzalez Sanchez, C. Jorda, P. Lobelle Pardo, A. Lopez Virto, J. Marco, R. Marco, C. Martinez Rivero, F. Matorras, F.J. Munoz Sanchez, T. Rodrigo, A.Y. Rodríguez-Marrero, A. Ruiz-Jimeno, L. Scodellaro, M. Sobron Sanudo, I. Vila, R. Vilar Cortabitarte

**CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland**

D. Abbaneo, E. Auffray, G. Auzinger, P. Baillon, A.H. Ball, D. Barney, C. Bernet<sup>6</sup>, G. Bianchi, P. Bloch, A. Bocci, A. Bonato, H. Breuker, T. Camporesi, G. Cerminara, T. Christiansen, J.A. Coarasa Perez, D. D'Enterria, A. Dabrowski, A. De Roeck, S. Di Guida, M. Dobson, N. Dupont-Sagorin, A. Elliott-Peisert, B. Frisch, W. Funk, G. Georgiou, M. Giffels, D. Gigi, K. Gill, D. Giordano, M. Giunta, F. Glege, R. Gomez-Reino Garrido, P. Govoni, S. Gowdy, R. Guida, M. Hansen, P. Harris, C. Hartl, J. Harvey, B. Hegner, A. Hinzmann, V. Innocente, P. Janot, K. Kaadze, E. Karavakis, K. Kousouris, P. Lecoq, Y.-J. Lee, P. Lenzi, C. Lourenço, T. Mäki, M. Malberti, L. Malgeri, M. Mannelli, L. Masetti, F. Meijers, S. Mersi, E. Meschi, R. Moser, M.U. Mozer, M. Mulders, P. Musella, E. Nesvold, T. Orimoto, L. Orsini, E. Palencia Cortezon, E. Perez, L. Perrozzi, A. Petrilli, A. Pfeiffer, M. Pierini, M. Pimiä, D. Piparo, G. Polese, L. Quertenmont, A. Racz, W. Reece, J. Rodrigues Antunes, G. Rolandi<sup>34</sup>, T. Rommelskirchen, C. Rovelli<sup>35</sup>, M. Rovere, H. Sakulin, F. Santanastasio, C. Schäfer, C. Schwick, I. Segoni, S. Sekmen, A. Sharma, P. Siegrist, P. Silva, M. Simon, P. Sphicas<sup>36</sup>, D. Spiga, M. Spiropulu<sup>4</sup>, M. Stoye, A. Tsirou, G.I. Veres<sup>19</sup>, J.R. Vlimant, H.K. Wöhri, S.D. Worm<sup>37</sup>, W.D. Zeuner

**Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland**

W. Bertl, K. Deiters, W. Erdmann, K. Gabathuler, R. Horisberger, Q. Ingram, H.C. Kaestli, S. König, D. Kotlinski, U. Langenegger, F. Meier, D. Renker, T. Rohe, J. Sibille<sup>38</sup>

**Institute for Particle Physics, ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland**

L. Bäni, P. Bortignon, M.A. Buchmann, B. Casal, N. Chanon, A. Deisher, G. Dissertori, M. Dittmar, M. Dünser, J. Eugster, K. Freudenreich, C. Grab, D. Hits, P. Lecomte, W. Lustermann, P. Martinez Ruiz del Arbol, N. Mohr, F. Moortgat, C. Nägeli<sup>39</sup>, P. Nef, F. Nessi-Tedaldi, F. Pandolfi, L. Pape, F. Pauss, M. Peruzzi, F.J. Ronga, M. Rossini, L. Sala, A.K. Sanchez, A. Starodumov<sup>40</sup>, B. Stieger, M. Takahashi, L. Tauscher<sup>†</sup>, A. Thea, K. Theofilatos, D. Treille, C. Urscheler, R. Wallny, H.A. Weber, L. Wehrli

**Universität Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland**

E. Aguilo, C. AMSler, V. Chiochia, S. De Visscher, C. Favaro, M. Ivova Rikova, B. Millan Mejias, P. Otiougova, P. Robmann, H. Snoek, S. Tupputi, M. Verzetti

**National Central University, Chung-Li, Taiwan**

Y.H. Chang, K.H. Chen, C.M. Kuo, S.W. Li, W. Lin, Z.K. Liu, Y.J. Lu, D. Mekterovic, A.P. Singh, R. Volpe, S.S. Yu

**National Taiwan University (NTU), Taipei, Taiwan**

P. Bartalini, P. Chang, Y.H. Chang, Y.W. Chang, Y. Chao, K.F. Chen, C. Dietz, U. Grundler, W.-S. Hou, Y. Hsiung, K.Y. Kao, Y.J. Lei, R.-S. Lu, D. Majumder, E. Petrakou, X. Shi, J.G. Shiu, Y.M. Tzeng, X. Wan, M. Wang

**Cukurova University, Adana, Turkey**

A. Adiguzel, M.N. Bakirci<sup>41</sup>, S. Cerci<sup>42</sup>, C. Dozen, I. Dumanoglu, E. Eskut, S. Girgis, G. Gokbulut, E. Gurpinar, I. Hos, E.E. Kangal, G. Karapinar, A. Kayis Topaksu, G. Onengut, K. Ozdemir, S. Ozturk<sup>43</sup>, A. Polatoz, K. Sogut<sup>44</sup>, D. Sunar Cerci<sup>42</sup>, B. Tali<sup>42</sup>, H. Topakli<sup>41</sup>, L.N. Vergili, M. Vergili

**Middle East Technical University, Physics Department, Ankara, Turkey**

I.V. Akin, T. Aliev, B. Bilin, S. Bilmis, M. Deniz, H. Gamsizkan, A.M. Guler, K. Ocalan, A. Ozpineci, M. Serin, R. Sever, U.E. Surat, M. Yalvac, E. Yildirim, M. Zeyrek

**Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey**

E. Gülmez, B. Isildak<sup>45</sup>, M. Kaya<sup>46</sup>, O. Kaya<sup>46</sup>, S. Ozkorucuklu<sup>47</sup>, N. Sonmez<sup>48</sup>

**Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey**

K. Cankocak

**National Scientific Center, Kharkov Institute of Physics and Technology, Kharkov, Ukraine**

L. Levchuk

**University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom**

F. Bostock, J.J. Brooke, E. Clement, D. Cussans, H. Flacher, R. Frazier, J. Goldstein, M. Grimes, G.P. Heath, H.F. Heath, L. Kreczko, S. Metson, D.M. Newbold<sup>37</sup>, K. Nirunpong, A. Poll, S. Senkin, V.J. Smith, T. Williams

**Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom**

L. Basso<sup>49</sup>, K.W. Bell, A. Belyaev<sup>49</sup>, C. Brew, R.M. Brown, D.J.A. Cockerill, J.A. Coughlan, K. Harder, S. Harper, J. Jackson, B.W. Kennedy, E. Olaiya, D. Petyt, B.C. Radburn-Smith, C.H. Shepherd-Themistocleous, I.R. Tomalin, W.J. Womersley

**Imperial College, London, United Kingdom**

R. Bainbridge, G. Ball, R. Beuselinck, O. Buchmuller, D. Colling, N. Cripps, M. Cutajar, P. Dauncey, G. Davies, M. Della Negra, W. Ferguson, J. Fulcher, D. Futyan, A. Gilbert, A. Guneratne Bryer, G. Hall, Z. Hatherell, J. Hays, G. Iles, M. Jarvis, G. Karapostoli, L. Lyons, A.-M. Magnan, J. Marrouche, B. Mathias, R. Nandi, J. Nash, A. Nikitenko<sup>40</sup>, A. Papageorgiou, J. Pela<sup>5</sup>, M. Pesaresi, K. Petridis, M. Pioppi<sup>50</sup>, D.M. Raymond, S. Rogerson, A. Rose, M.J. Ryan, C. Seez, P. Sharp<sup>†</sup>, A. Sparrow, A. Tapper, M. Vazquez Acosta, T. Virdee, S. Wakefield, N. Wardle, T. Whyntie

**Brunel University, Uxbridge, United Kingdom**

M. Chadwick, J.E. Cole, P.R. Hobson, A. Khan, P. Kyberd, D. Leslie, W. Martin, I.D. Reid, P. Symonds, L. Teodorescu, M. Turner

**Baylor University, Waco, USA**

K. Hatakeyama, H. Liu, T. Scarborough

**The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, USA**

C. Henderson, P. Rumerio

**Boston University, Boston, USA**

A. Avetisyan, T. Bose, C. Fantasia, A. Heister, J. St. John, P. Lawson, D. Lazic, J. Rohlf, D. Sperka, L. Sulak

**Brown University, Providence, USA**

J. Alimena, S. Bhattacharya, D. Cutts, A. Ferapontov, U. Heintz, S. Jabeen, G. Kukartsev, E. Laird, G. Landsberg, M. Luk, M. Narain, D. Nguyen, M. Segala, T. Sinthuprasith, T. Speer, K.V. Tsang

**University of California, Davis, Davis, USA**

R. Breedon, G. Breto, M. Calderon De La Barca Sanchez, S. Chauhan, M. Chertok, J. Conway, R. Conway, P.T. Cox, J. Dolen, R. Erbacher, M. Gardner, R. Houtz, W. Ko, A. Kopecky, R. Lander, O. Mall, T. Miceli, R. Nelson, D. Pellett, B. Rutherford, M. Searle, J. Smith, M. Squires, M. Tripathi, R. Vasquez Sierra

**University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA**

V. Andreev, D. Cline, R. Cousins, J. Duris, S. Erhan, P. Everaerts, C. Farrell, J. Hauser, M. Ignatenko, C. Plager, G. Rakness, P. Schlein<sup>†</sup>, J. Tucker, V. Valuev, M. Weber

**University of California, Riverside, Riverside, USA**

J. Babb, R. Clare, M.E. Dinardo, J. Ellison, J.W. Gary, F. Giordano, G. Hanson, G.Y. Jeng<sup>51</sup>, H. Liu, O.R. Long, A. Luthra, H. Nguyen, S. Paramesvaran, J. Sturdy, S. Sumowidagdo, R. Wilken, S. Wimpenny

**University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, USA**

W. Andrews, J.G. Branson, G.B. Cerati, S. Cittolin, D. Evans, F. Golf, A. Holzner, R. Kelley, M. Lebourgeois, J. Letts, I. Macneill, B. Mangano, S. Padhi, C. Palmer, G. Petrucciani, M. Pieri, M. Sani, V. Sharma, S. Simon, E. Sudano, M. Tadel, Y. Tu, A. Vartak, S. Wasserbaech<sup>52</sup>, F. Würthwein, A. Yagil, J. Yoo

**University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, USA**

D. Barge, R. Bellan, C. Campagnari, M. D'Alfonso, T. Danielson, K. Flowers, P. Geffert, J. Incandela, C. Justus, P. Kalavase, S.A. Koay, D. Kovalskyi, V. Krutelyov, S. Lowette, N. Mccoll, V. Pavlunin, F. Rebassoo, J. Ribnik, J. Richman, R. Rossin, D. Stuart, W. To, C. West

**California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA**

A. Apresyan, A. Bornheim, Y. Chen, E. Di Marco, J. Duarte, M. Gataullin, Y. Ma, A. Mott, H.B. Newman, C. Rogan, V. Timciuc, P. Traczyk, J. Veverka, R. Wilkinson, Y. Yang, R.Y. Zhu

**Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA**

B. Akgun, R. Carroll, T. Ferguson, Y. Iiyama, D.W. Jang, Y.F. Liu, M. Paulini, H. Vogel, I. Vorobiev

**University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, USA**

J.P. Cumalat, B.R. Drell, C.J. Edelmaier, W.T. Ford, A. Gaz, B. Heyburn, E. Luigi Lopez, J.G. Smith, K. Stenson, K.A. Ulmer, S.R. Wagner

**Cornell University, Ithaca, USA**

J. Alexander, A. Chatterjee, N. Eggert, L.K. Gibbons, B. Heltsley, A. Khukhunaishvili, B. Kreis, N. Mirman, G. Nicolas Kaufman, J.R. Patterson, A. Ryd, E. Salvati, W. Sun, W.D. Teo, J. Thom, J. Thompson, J. Vaughan, Y. Weng, L. Winstrom, P. Wittich

**Fairfield University, Fairfield, USA**

D. Winn

**Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, USA**

S. Abdullin, M. Albrow, J. Anderson, L.A.T. Bauerdick, A. Beretvas, J. Berryhill, P.C. Bhat, I. Bloch, K. Burkett, J.N. Butler, V. Chetluru, H.W.K. Cheung, F. Chlebana, V.D. Elvira, I. Fisk, J. Freeman, Y. Gao, D. Green, O. Gutsche, J. Hanlon, R.M. Harris, J. Hirschauer, B. Hooberman, S. Jindariani, M. Johnson, U. Joshi, B. Kilminster, B. Klima, S. Kunori, S. Kwan, C. Leonidopoulos, D. Lincoln, R. Lipton, J. Lykken, K. Maeshima, J.M. Marraffino, S. Maruyama, D. Mason, P. McBride, K. Mishra, S. Mrenna, Y. Musienko<sup>53</sup>, C. Newman-Holmes, V. O'Dell, O. Prokofyev, E. Sexton-Kennedy, S. Sharma, W.J. Spalding, L. Spiegel, P. Tan, L. Taylor, S. Tkaczyk, N.V. Tran, L. Uplegger, E.W. Vaandering, R. Vidal, J. Whitmore, W. Wu, F. Yang, F. Yumiceva, J.C. Yun

**University of Florida, Gainesville, USA**

D. Acosta, P. Avery, D. Bourilkov, M. Chen, S. Das, M. De Gruttola, G.P. Di Giovanni, D. Dobur, A. Drozdetskiy, R.D. Field, M. Fisher, Y. Fu, I.K. Furic, J. Gartner, J. Hugon, B. Kim, J. Konigsberg, A. Korytov, A. Kropivnitskaya, T. Kypreos, J.F. Low, K. Matchev, P. Milenovic<sup>54</sup>, G. Mitselmakher, L. Muniz, R. Remington, A. Rinkevicius, P. Sellers, N. Skhirtladze, M. Snowball, J. Yelton, M. Zakaria

**Florida International University, Miami, USA**

V. Gaultney, L.M. Lebolo, S. Linn, P. Markowitz, G. Martinez, J.L. Rodriguez

**Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA**

T. Adams, A. Askew, J. Bochenek, J. Chen, B. Diamond, S.V. Gleyzer, J. Haas, S. Hagopian, V. Hagopian, M. Jenkins, K.F. Johnson, H. Prosper, V. Veeraraghavan, M. Weinberg

**Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, USA**

M.M. Baarmand, B. Dorney, M. Hohlmann, H. Kalakhety, I. Vodopiyanov

**University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Chicago, USA**

M.R. Adams, I.M. Anghel, L. Apanasevich, Y. Bai, V.E. Bazterra, R.R. Betts, I. Bucinskaite, J. Callner, R. Cavanaugh, C. Dragoiu, O. Evdokimov, L. Gauthier, C.E. Gerber, D.J. Hofman, S. Khalatyan, F. Lacroix, M. Malek, C. O'Brien, C. Silkworth, D. Strom, N. Varelas

**The University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA**

U. Akgun, E.A. Albayrak, B. Bilki<sup>55</sup>, W. Clarida, F. Duru, S. Griffiths, J.-P. Merlo, H. Mermerkaya<sup>56</sup>, A. Mestvirishvili, A. Moeller, J. Nachtman, C.R. Newsom, E. Norbeck, Y. Onel, F. Ozok, S. Sen, E. Tiras, J. Wetzel, T. Yetkin, K. Yi

**Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA**

B.A. Barnett, B. Blumenfeld, S. Bolognesi, D. Fehling, G. Giurgiu, A.V. Gritsan, Z.J. Guo, G. Hu, P. Maksimovic, S. Rappoccio, M. Swartz, A. Whitbeck

**The University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA**

P. Baringer, A. Bean, G. Benelli, O. Grachov, R.P. Kenny Iii, M. Murray, D. Noonan, S. Sanders, R. Stringer, G. Tinti, J.S. Wood, V. Zhukova

**Kansas State University, Manhattan, USA**

A.F. Barfuss, T. Bolton, I. Chakaberia, A. Ivanov, S. Khalil, M. Makouski, Y. Maravin, S. Shrestha, I. Svintradze

**Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, USA**

J. Gronberg, D. Lange, D. Wright

**University of Maryland, College Park, USA**

A. Baden, M. Boutemur, B. Calvert, S.C. Eno, J.A. Gomez, N.J. Hadley, R.G. Kellogg, M. Kirn, T. Kolberg, Y. Lu, M. Marionneau, A.C. Mignerey, A. Peterman, A. Skuja, J. Temple, M.B. Tonjes, S.C. Tonwar, E. Twedt

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA**

G. Bauer, J. Bendavid, W. Busza, E. Butz, I.A. Cali, M. Chan, V. Dutta, G. Gomez Ceballos, M. Goncharov, K.A. Hahn, Y. Kim, M. Klute, K. Krajczar<sup>57</sup>, W. Li, P.D. Luckey, T. Ma, S. Nahn, C. Paus, D. Ralph, C. Roland, G. Roland, M. Rudolph, G.S.F. Stephans, F. Stöckli, K. Sumorok, K. Sung, D. Velicanu, E.A. Wenger, R. Wolf, B. Wyslouch, S. Xie, M. Yang, Y. Yilmaz, A.S. Yoon, M. Zanetti

**University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA**

S.I. Cooper, B. Dahmes, A. De Benedetti, G. Franzoni, A. Gude, S.C. Kao, K. Klapoetke, Y. Kubota, J. Mans, N. Pastika, R. Rusack, M. Sasseville, A. Singovsky, N. Tambe, J. Turkewitz

**University of Mississippi, University, USA**

L.M. Cremaldi, R. Kroeger, L. Perera, R. Rahmat, D.A. Sanders

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, USA**

E. Avdeeva, K. Bloom, S. Bose, J. Butt, D.R. Claes, A. Dominguez, M. Eads, J. Keller, I. Kravchenko, J. Lazo-Flores, H. Malbouisson, S. Malik, G.R. Snow

**State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, USA**

U. Baur, A. Godshalk, I. Iashvili, S. Jain, A. Kharchilava, A. Kumar, S.P. Shipkowski, K. Smith

**Northeastern University, Boston, USA**

G. Alverson, E. Barberis, D. Baumgartel, M. Chasco, J. Haley, D. Nash, D. Trocino, D. Wood, J. Zhang

**Northwestern University, Evanston, USA**

A. Anastassov, A. Kubik, N. Mucia, N. Odell, R.A. Ofierzynski, B. Pollack, A. Pozdnyakov, M. Schmitt, S. Stoynev, M. Velasco, S. Won

**University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, USA**

L. Antonelli, D. Berry, A. Brinkerhoff, M. Hildreth, C. Jessop, D.J. Karmgard, J. Kolb, K. Lannon, W. Luo, S. Lynch, N. Marinelli, D.M. Morse, T. Pearson, R. Ruchti, J. Slaunwhite, N. Valls, M. Wayne, M. Wolf

**The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA**

B. Bylsma, L.S. Durkin, C. Hill, R. Hughes, K. Kotov, T.Y. Ling, D. Puigh, M. Rodenburg, C. Vuosalo, G. Williams, B.L. Winer

**Princeton University, Princeton, USA**

N. Adam, E. Berry, P. Elmer, D. Gerbaudo, V. Halyo, P. Hebda, J. Hegeman, A. Hunt, P. Jindal, D. Lopes Pegna, P. Lujan, D. Marlow, T. Medvedeva, M. Mooney, J. Olsen, P. Piroué, X. Quan, A. Raval, H. Saka, D. Stickland, C. Tully, J.S. Werner, A. Zuranski

**University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, USA**

J.G. Acosta, E. Brownson, X.T. Huang, A. Lopez, H. Mendez, S. Oliveros, J.E. Ramirez Vargas, A. Zatserklyaniy

**Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA**

E. Alagoz, V.E. Barnes, D. Benedetti, G. Bolla, D. Bortoletto, M. De Mattia, A. Everett, Z. Hu, M. Jones, O. Koybasi, M. Kress, A.T. Laasanen, N. Leonardo, V. Maroussov, P. Merkel,

D.H. Miller, N. Neumeister, I. Shipsey, D. Silvers, A. Svyatkovskiy, M. Vidal Marono, H.D. Yoo, J. Zablocki, Y. Zheng

**Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, USA**

S. Guragain, N. Parashar

**Rice University, Houston, USA**

A. Adair, C. Boulahouache, K.M. Ecklund, F.J.M. Geurts, B.P. Padley, R. Redjimi, J. Roberts, J. Zabel

**University of Rochester, Rochester, USA**

B. Betchart, A. Bodek, Y.S. Chung, R. Covarelli, P. de Barbaro, R. Demina, Y. Eshaq, A. Garcia-Bellido, P. Goldenzweig, J. Han, A. Harel, D.C. Miner, D. Vishnevskiy, M. Zielinski

**The Rockefeller University, New York, USA**

A. Bhatti, R. Ciesielski, L. Demortier, K. Goulianos, G. Lungu, S. Malik, C. Mesropian

**Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Piscataway, USA**

S. Arora, A. Barker, J.P. Chou, C. Contreras-Campana, E. Contreras-Campana, D. Duggan, D. Ferencek, Y. Gershtein, R. Gray, E. Halkiadakis, D. Hidas, A. Lath, S. Panwalkar, M. Park, R. Patel, V. Rekovic, J. Robles, K. Rose, S. Salur, S. Schnetzer, C. Seitz, S. Somalwar, R. Stone, S. Thomas

**University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA**

G. Cerizza, M. Hollingsworth, S. Spanier, Z.C. Yang, A. York

**Texas A&M University, College Station, USA**

R. Eusebi, W. Flanagan, J. Gilmore, T. Kamon<sup>58</sup>, V. Khotilovich, R. Montalvo, I. Osipenkov, Y. Pakhotin, A. Perloff, J. Roe, A. Safonov, T. Sakuma, S. Sengupta, I. Suarez, A. Tatarinov, D. Toback

**Texas Tech University, Lubbock, USA**

N. Akchurin, J. Damgov, P.R. Duderod, C. Jeong, K. Kovitanggoon, S.W. Lee, T. Libeiro, Y. Roh, I. Volobouev

**Vanderbilt University, Nashville, USA**

E. Appelt, C. Florez, S. Greene, A. Gurrola, W. Johns, C. Johnston, P. Kurt, C. Maguire, A. Melo, P. Sheldon, B. Snook, S. Tuo, J. Velkovska

**University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA**

M.W. Arenton, M. Balazs, S. Boutle, B. Cox, B. Francis, J. Goodell, R. Hirosky, A. Ledovskoy, C. Lin, C. Neu, J. Wood, R. Yohay

**Wayne State University, Detroit, USA**

S. Gollapinni, R. Harr, P.E. Karchin, C. Kottachchi Kankanamge Don, P. Lamichhane, A. Sakharov

**University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA**

M. Anderson, M. Bachtis, D. Belknap, L. Borrello, D. Carlsmith, M. Cepeda, S. Dasu, L. Gray, K.S. Grogg, M. Grothe, R. Hall-Wilton, M. Herndon, A. Hervé, P. Klabbers, J. Klukas, A. Lanaro, C. Lazaridis, J. Leonard, R. Loveless, A. Mohapatra, I. Ojalvo, F. Palmonari, G.A. Pierro, I. Ross, A. Savin, W.H. Smith, J. Swanson

†: Deceased

1: Also at Vienna University of Technology, Vienna, Austria

2: Also at National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Tallinn, Estonia



- 3: Also at Universidade Federal do ABC, Santo Andre, Brazil
- 4: Also at California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, USA
- 5: Also at CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Geneva, Switzerland
- 6: Also at Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, Ecole Polytechnique, IN2P3-CNRS, Palaiseau, France
- 7: Also at Suez Canal University, Suez, Egypt
- 8: Also at Zewail City of Science and Technology, Zewail, Egypt
- 9: Also at Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt
- 10: Also at Fayoum University, El-Fayoum, Egypt
- 11: Also at Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt
- 12: Now at British University, Cairo, Egypt
- 13: Also at Soltan Institute for Nuclear Studies, Warsaw, Poland
- 14: Also at Université de Haute-Alsace, Mulhouse, France
- 15: Now at Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia
- 16: Also at Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia
- 17: Also at Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany
- 18: Also at Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary
- 19: Also at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary
- 20: Also at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research - HECR, Mumbai, India
- 21: Also at University of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India
- 22: Also at Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran
- 23: Also at Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan, Iran
- 24: Also at Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran
- 25: Also at Plasma Physics Research Center, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Teheran, Iran
- 26: Also at Facoltà Ingegneria Università di Roma, Roma, Italy
- 27: Also at Università della Basilicata, Potenza, Italy
- 28: Also at Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi, Roma, Italy
- 29: Also at Università degli studi di Siena, Siena, Italy
- 30: Also at University of Bucharest, Faculty of Physics, Bucuresti-Magurele, Romania
- 31: Also at Faculty of Physics of University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia
- 32: Also at University of Florida, Gainesville, USA
- 33: Also at University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA
- 34: Also at Scuola Normale e Sezione dell' INFN, Pisa, Italy
- 35: Also at INFN Sezione di Roma; Università di Roma "La Sapienza", Roma, Italy
- 36: Also at University of Athens, Athens, Greece
- 37: Also at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Didcot, United Kingdom
- 38: Also at The University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA
- 39: Also at Paul Scherrer Institut, Villigen, Switzerland
- 40: Also at Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow, Russia
- 41: Also at Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey
- 42: Also at Adiyaman University, Adiyaman, Turkey
- 43: Also at The University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA
- 44: Also at Mersin University, Mersin, Turkey
- 45: Also at Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Turkey
- 46: Also at Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey
- 47: Also at Suleyman Demirel University, Isparta, Turkey
- 48: Also at Ege University, Izmir, Turkey
- 49: Also at School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom

- 50: Also at INFN Sezione di Perugia; Università di Perugia, Perugia, Italy
- 51: Also at University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
- 52: Also at Utah Valley University, Orem, USA
- 53: Also at Institute for Nuclear Research, Moscow, Russia
- 54: Also at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Physics and Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia
- 55: Also at Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, USA
- 56: Also at Erzincan University, Erzincan, Turkey
- 57: Also at KFKI Research Institute for Particle and Nuclear Physics, Budapest, Hungary
- 58: Also at Kyungpook National University, Daegu, Korea